REMARKS

The Examiner's outstanding Office Action of March 22 has been carefully considered. By this amendment a number of claims have been amended so as to more clearly state the invention. Several new claims, also allowable, have been added hereby.

An apparatus which embodies the present invention makes it possible for an individual operating or working in a region being monitored to communication, bidirectionally, with a variety of displaced devices including a displaced common control console for a system which is monitoring the region. In accordance with one embodiment of the invention, the individual can use a portable handheld device, which communicates wirelessly with the a variety of units, coupled to the monitoring system.

Instructions or commands or inquiries can be dispatched by the individual by the handheld device, to identify displaced units of the monitoring system which can include a variety of ambient condition detectors such as smoke detectors, fire detectors, intrusion detectors, pull stations, output devices or the like all without limitation. The devices or units coupled to the monitoring system need not be identical.

One of the units coupled to the monitoring system can be an operator's control console which can provide graphical indicia to an operator as to status of various conditions in the region being monitored. Messages can be sent to and from the handheld devices between the control console as well as to and from the handheld device and any of the other units in the system including those which are coupled via wired or wireless media to the control console.

Unlike the claimed structures, Johnson et al. U.S. patent 6,970,077 discloses an apparatus which has a plurality of substantially identical detectors, see FIG. 2 thereof which are identified therein as "an interconnected detector system 28 which incorporates a plurality of substantially identical detectors 30". (Col. 3, ll. 59-61, Johnson et al.)

Systems as the type described above, and illustrated in FIG. 2 of Johnson et al. operate without, and teach away from, the use of operator consoles. The members of the substantially identical group of detectors can communicate with one another via cable 32.

Now for example, and without limitation, none of the pending claims are anticipated by Johnson et al. which does not include at least the following limitations:

"a common control console, displaced from at least some of the nodes and in communication therewith of via the medium" (pending claims 20-23, 25-29;

"a plurality of at least 3 spaced apart nodes, at least one of the nodes is unlike the others, the nodes each include communication circuitry and communicate directly with one another via a medium" (pending claims 30-34;

"at least some of the nodes include at least one sensor selected from a class which includes heat sensors, flame sensors, smoke sensors and gas sensors with one of the nodes comprising a common control element where the common control element includes a graphical output device for operator information" (pending claims 35-39);

"a plurality of spaced apart different nodes" (pending claim 40).

While we recognize that the Examiner has rejected several claims as obvious such as claim 26 (unpatentable over Johnson et al. in view of Lucas et al.), 32-36, 39, 40 rejected as unpatentable over Johnson et al.; and 37, 38 rejected as obvious and unpatentable over Johnson et al. in view of Lennartz et al., nevertheless, none of the secondary documents addresses the deficiencies of the apparatus of Johnson et al. in a way that would suggest motivate or teach one of skill in the art to modify Johnson et al. so as to make the respective claim obvious. Newly added claims 41-43 are allowable for at least the above reasons.

In the Office Action the Examiner rejected the pending claims pursuant to 35 USC § 112 first paragraph as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. It is submitted that this rejection is not well founded as explained below.

Various types of peer-to-peer operating systems are known. For example, attached is a copy of U.S. patent 6,691,172 B1 issued February 10, 2004 with a filing date of December 15, 1998. The '172 patent is assigned to the assignee hereof. That patent clearly discloses various types of communications between nodes of the respective network. It has been known for many years to identify different computer-type devices using pre-assigned addresses. It is further submitted that the disclosure and pending claims are directed to those of skill in the art. They need not provide a manufacturing specification to meet the enablement requirement. Those of skill in the art who were familiar with the present application, figures and claims, would be enabled to make and/or use the invention. The exact details as to how, for example, a device/node determines the final/non-final recipient of the communication are not limitations of the present invention. For example, the handheld unit could transmit a node identifier, or address, entered by the operator via input device 36 thereof. Any receiving node or device would recognize a message which contained its address (as the recipient), or another address. The message could then be forwarded to the common control element or other identified device.

For at least the above reasons, the pending application is in condition for allowance and such allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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